



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

DHS AGENTS NAB TWO MORE MS-13 GANG MEMBERS

Admitted MS-13 gang members are now facing re-entry after deportation charges and deportation

HOUSTON — U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents here arrested two more MS-13 gang members this week as part of its ongoing national initiative called Operation Community Shield, designed to combat the violence in communities associated with street gangs.

ICE special agents yesterday arrested William Orlando Lima-Hernandez, 25, a citizen of Guatemala, at a construction sight off Kirkwood Dr. in Houston. After completing a criminal background check, ICE agents confirmed that Lima-Hernandez was an illegal alien and also was deported in July 2000. Re-entering the U.S. after being formally deported is a felony.

Luis Alfredo Garcia-Calderon, 25, a citizen of El Salvador, was arrested Monday when he was unable to provide U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents with the proper documentation during a routine checkpoint inspection while on a bus headed for Corpus Christi, Texas.

“We will continue to use our immigration laws as a tool to remove these gang members from the United States,” said Bob Rutt, ICE’s special agent-in-charge. “We will not let known gang members from other countries to sneak into the U.S. to avoid prosecution in their native countries.”

Lima-Hernandez and Garcia-Calderon admitted to officers that they had affiliations to the MS-13 gangs, and were in the country illegally. Lima-Hernandez has been placed into removal proceedings, while Garcia-Calderon faces criminal charges for re-entry after deportation. If convicted, Garcia-Calderon faces up to 20 years in prison.

This week's arrests are part of Operation Community Shield, an ICE initiative launched in January to target and dismantle violent street gangs across the country. ICE's combined authorities for enforcing immigration and customs laws are powerful tools in fighting the growth of these criminal organizations. ICE has gathered thousands of names of known and suspected gang members from state and local law enforcement, and is comparing those names against immigration databases to determine immigration status and deportability. ICE can also investigate the money laundering, narcotics smuggling, financial crimes and other cross-border crimes typically committed by street gangs.

To date, Operation Community Shield has led to the arrest of hundreds of different gang members nationwide, including more than 400 members of the violent street gang Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13).

Operation Community Shield is designed to disrupt, dismantle and prosecute violent gang organizations by employing the full range of enforcement authorities and investigative tools available to ICE.

Working with ICE Detention and Removal Operations, the ICE Office of Investigations uses deportation as an important law enforcement tool to target gang members. Gang members who return to the U.S. after deportation face stiff jail sentences if they're encountered by any law enforcement agency. Re-entering the U.S. after formal deportation is a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.